

# TORRANCE FAMILY LOSES ALL AS FLAMES DESTROY HOME



NOTHING LEFT—Tragedy again overtook the Gene Offutt family when their home was completely destroyed by flames Wednesday night while they were away. Family's problems started a year ago when Offutt lost his job and their daughter suffered spinal meningitis.

## Big Hike In School Tax Set

The tax rate for the Torrance Unified School District will increase to \$3.2041 per \$100 assessed valuation for the 1958-59 school year, although the district's costs per student were lowest in the county last year.

The County Board of Supervisors acted Tuesday to set the official tax rate for the next school year. Taxes for 1958-59 will be an increase from last year's \$2.8781 figure. Included in the total are an additional 16 cents for current operating expenses, due to higher costs, and one cent for payment on state loan funds. The remainder of the increase is caused by fluctuations in the bond tax rate.

A breakdown of the 1958-59 Torrance school taxes is as follows:

**Break-down**  
 Current operating expenses, \$2.2249; bond retirement and interest, \$.8926; employe retirement, \$.0568; teacher retirement, \$.0816; state loan fund repayment, \$.0112.

At the same time, figures released by the County Superintendent of Schools showed that the Torrance district's average costs for the last year were the lowest of any unified school district in the county, at \$323.21 per student.

In two categories — plant maintenance and fixed charges — the district's cost per student were lowest in the county. In four others — administration, instruction, auxiliary services, and plant operation — costs were considerably below the county average. Transportation costs were somewhat above average.

Torrance's costs per student (compared with the county average, in parentheses) were:

Administration, \$12.08 (\$13.77); Instruction, \$238.18 (283.70); auxiliary services, \$9.30 (\$10.08); plant operation, \$36.16 (\$40.73); fixed charges, \$12.09 (\$16.08); and transportation, \$7.38 (\$8.83).

Assessed valuation of the Torrance Unified School District for 1958-59 will be \$181,269,230, with about \$1.9 million in valuations contested, according to word received by local school officials.

The figures represented \$155,549,950 in secured property, \$9,184,210 in unsecured property, and \$12,555,070 for public utilities.



CHARRED—Mr. and Mrs. Gene Offutt and their daughter, Sue Ann, 3, sadly look at a trunk containing their possessions after it was charred during fire at their house. Tragedy-stricken family is being helped by Torrance Moose Lodge. Press Photos by Milf Svesk

## Airport Day Featured Race

An air race to Palm Springs, exhibitions and tours marked Saturday's observance of the First annual Torrance Municipal Airport Day.

The program opened at the airfield at 10:30 a.m. and continued until late afternoon.

Feature of the day was the air race to Palm Springs and return.

A Redondo Beach truck driver was given a 60 day jail sentence and placed on three years probation by Municipal Judge Donald Armstrong on charges that he chiseled \$88 of unemployment insurance benefits.

James Edward McKee, 29, of 2514 Vanderbilt Lane, was also ordered to make restitution.

## Man Jailed for Benefit Cheat

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## Council Meet Postponed

City offices will be closed Tuesday, as Torrance observes Admission Day, marking the state's entry into the Union.

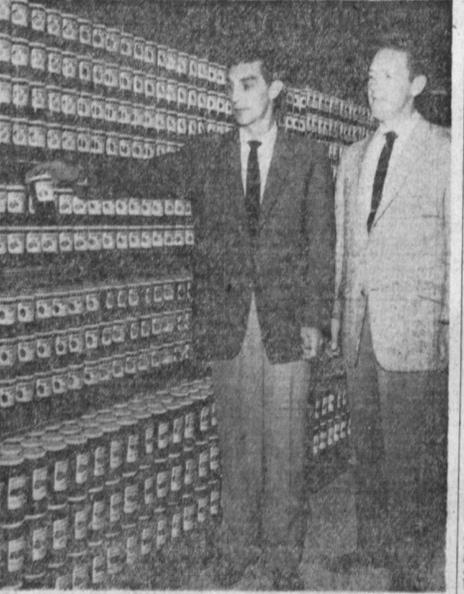
The Regular City Council meeting Tuesday, was postponed until 8 p.m. Wednesday.

## Registrars on City Hall Duty

Arrangements have been made to keep the city hall open until 10 p.m. Thursday.

The deadline for registering to vote in the November General election, according to Jim Thompson, chairman of the registration drive.

He pointed out that deputy registrars will be on duty in front of banks, stores and in various parts of the city to assure a record number of vote registrations.



INSPECT DISPLAY—Manager Vincent Michaels, left, and Bob Smith, grocery supervisor, inspect attractive display of canned goods inside the new Food Giant Market, which will hold its grand opening beginning Thursday.

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# One Killed, 3 Injured In Elevator Accident

## Moose Lodge to Aid House Fire Victims

Tragedy — the third in a year — struck a Torrance family this week when their house burned to the ground, leaving them without any possessions except the clothes on their backs.

The fire broke out Wednesday night just as Mrs. Gene Offutt, and her three children returned to what had been their modest home at 944 W. Milton st.

One room, badly gutted, was still standing. In it was the charred body of the family's dog.

Mrs. Offutt, still in formal clothes after attending a Women of the Moose lodge meeting with her three children, Charles, 9; David, 6; and Sue Ann, 3, sadly surveyed the place that had meant home to them since arriving here from Milwaukee last January.

**Provide Help**

Her husband, Gene, was called from his night job as a janitor at Harbor General Hospital, and members of the Moose Lodge immediately put them up for the night, and provided some clothes for them.

Both the men's and women's chapters of the Moose have started a campaign to provide the Offutts with the necessities of life, and are seeking building material contributions from Torrance business firms, in order that Moose members can rebuild the house from the ashes.

It is the third time in less than a year that tragedy has struck the family.

**Laid Off**

Offutt was laid off from his job, and his wife, who had been working part time, was given notice. During the months that followed, the family's savings disappeared, and creditors started pressing them for cash.

Then came even worse news. Sue Ann was suffering from spinal meningitis.

It was another blow to the jobless family, but under good medical care, the little girl recovered.

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AIR HEARING—Discussing their hearing on legislation which would require compulsory airplane insurance are State Sen. Stephen Teale, Sen. Fred Farr, and Assemblyman Vincent Thomas, from left to right. Hearing was held in Lomita.

## Set Vote On Mayor Cow Ban

The controversial dairy ban law and a possible hassle over the election of a Mayor pro tem loom as the highlights of the City Council meeting which has been postponed until Wednesday at 8 p.m.

The proposal to adopt an ordinance which will declare the city's 11 dairies a public nuisance, and provides for their closing by Jan. 1, 1960, confronts the council again after a 90 day "cooling off" period.

At the same time, a tiff could break out over the election of a temporary chairman to preside over the meeting because of the absence of Mayor Albert Isen, who left Thursday on a two weeks trip to Florida.

**Postpone Vote**

Councilman J. A. Beasley last week attempted to nominate his colleague, Robert Jahn for the mayor's post, but his move was opposed by Councilmen Willy Blount and Nickolas O. Draie, who wanted to hold up the election until this week, when Isen is gone.

Ordinarily the council is split into two political blocs on major issues, and the schism may break out in the selection of a temporary mayor.

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## Lift Falls 60 Feet With Men

One workman was killed and three others seriously injured when a temporary elevator plunged 60 feet down the shaft in a construction job in the Del Amo Shopping Center, Friday morning.

Police said their investigation disclosed that a supporting beam at the top of the elevator shaft broke loose, causing the platform on which three men were being hoisted, to crash into the basement well of the new Broadway Department Store, at Hawthorne blvd. and Carson st.

Pronounced dead on arrival at Harbor General Hospital was Anthony Stavros, 29, of San Pedro, who apparently was struck on the head by the falling platform while he worked on the shaft at the second floor.

The other three men, identified as John Hopton, 39, of El Monte, William J. Ashbaugh, 29, of Inglewood, and Gregory Dussault, 35, of Los Angeles, were being hoisted above the third floor to work on the permanent elevator structure.

The platform on which they stood, was being manually hoisted by Harry Askew, foreman for the Otis Elevator Co., by whom the quartet was employed. Askew stood at the first floor.

Suddenly a heavy beam which held the pulley wheel and other mechanism for the temporary elevator, broke loose, causing the platform to tumble down the shaft into the basement well, witnesses told police.

**Pretty Fast**

"The beams went down pretty fast on the way down," one of the injured workers said.

Hopton suffered a broken leg and several fractured ribs. Ashbaugh was treated for a broken foot and injured nose, while Dussault apparently suffered only a minor leg injury, police said.

After emergency treatment at Harbor General Hospital, the three survivors were taken to California Hospital.

## Solons Promise Action on Airplane Insurance Law

Promises that they will introduce bills requiring liability insurance for airplanes, were made by two solons following a hearing on the matter in Lomita this week.

State Sen. Stephen Teale (D-West Point) and Assemblyman Vincent Thomas, (D-Torrance), said they will introduce financial responsibility laws when the Legislature convenes next year.

The hearing, conducted in Lomita Elementary School, was called by Thomas as result of efforts by Lomita civic groups to obtain such legislation to protect victims of air crashes.

A majority of the dozen witnesses who testified before the interim committee, favored aviation insurance patterned after the law now in effect for motorists.

Among witnesses in favor of such action were Mrs. Dessie Myers, president of the Lomita Property and Registered Voters Association, Marshall Pine of the Lomita Civic League, George Larson of the Lomita Chamber of Commerce and Don Bowker, Lomita insurance broker.

Woodruff De Silva, manager of International Airport, also plumped for the law.

Principal witness against the legislation was Emery Stromberg, co-owner of the Yucca Valley Airport. He pointed out that the law would not be enforceable since some planes have several owners, and many planes are flown here from other states.

**POST OFFICE SPEAKER**

Michael F. Houlihan from the Long Beach Post Office will address the Carson Chamber of Commerce Sept. 8 at 8 p.m. at Manuel's Cafe, 21512 S. Avalon blvd.

## New Food Giant Store Grand Opening Slated Thursday

The newest and most modern Food Giant Market makes its debut Thursday at the corner of Anza boulevard and 190th street in North Torrance when movie starlet Kathy Marlow cuts the ribbon marking the beginning of four big star-studded days of value, fun and entertainment.

Food Giant officials planned the opening of the new 40,000 square foot market, the sixteenth in the burgeoning chain's operation, to coincide with the opening of schools, thus offering residents of the area scores and scores of special food values when they are most appreciated.

"Back-to-school needs become a burden on most budgets, and we hope to ease the problem for new friends and neighbors in this area with our super-value, grand opening food specials," Vincent Michael, newly appointed manager of the 190th st. Food Giant, said.

**Torrance Resident**

Michael lives at 2631 Lofty View drive in Torrance with his wife and son, aged 10. He takes over his newest assignment with the confidence that comes from 25 years in the grocery business, the last 13 years with Food Giant. He started with the firm in 1945, when he was hired as a stock clerk. He was advanced to a management position in 1953 and most recently served as market manager of Food Giant's Hawthorne store.

All employees of the chain's local unit were hired from the area surrounding the market, including the 80 box boys who will be on hand to facilitate a speedy check-out, and assist customers in carrying groceries to their automobiles.

On hand to officiate at opening ceremonies Thursday will be city and chamber of commerce officials and all Food Giant personnel.

The Rev. Milton Sippel will offer a special commemorative service before the ribbon cutting ceremonies begin.

**Growing Area**

The new Food Giant Market is an imposing structure located on the southwest corner of 190th st. at Anza blvd. In selecting the site, company officials considered its availability to a widespread, growing area of home-makers.

Food Giant's president, Theodore Cummings, a leader in the food industry, said, "Torrance is one of the fastest growth areas in Southern California, a city noted for its family environment, its excellent climate, wonderful schools, churches, recreational facilities, and youth groups. We're proud of our expanding role in the retail development of Torrance and look forward to long years of continuing pleasant associations."

Cummings, who serves as president of the chain of Southern California super markets, which include some of the largest markets in the world, began his career in the grocery business, and throughout the years has built his organization into one of the strongest, most thoroughly integrated service organizations in the Southland. "Growth doesn't come by itself," he said, "it comes with the application of effort and industry to create a product and service at a price that attracts customers."



GRAND OPENING—The latest in food merchandizing and architectural design will be combined in this new Food Giant supermarket in the shopping center at 190th St. and Anza Ave., which will begin its grand opening sale Thursday. Huge parking area is provided for shopping comfort.